

October 11, 2001

Ms. Carol Hanlon
S&ER Products Manager
U. S. Department of Energy
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office
P.O. Box 30307 M/S 025
North Las Vegas, NV 89036-0707

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OCT 23 2001

Dear Ms. Hanlon:

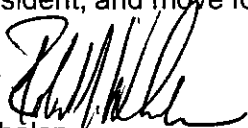
I am writing to ask that the Department of Energy recommend to President George Bush that the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada be designated the national repository for high-level radioactive waste and spent fuel.

I personally am firmly committed to nuclear safety, having spent over 20 years in the commercial nuclear field in various engineering leadership positions. Commercial nuclear power plants were not conceived as permanent storage facilities. Currently, many (including mine) are in the midst of a dry cask storage program. Development and implementation of a permanent storage facility is a *critical* national need, not only to support continued operation of commercial nuclear facilities, but to provide permanent storage with greatly improved safety. This is even more important in light of the recent terrorist incidents in our country.

The nuclear industry has been handling, storing and transporting spent nuclear fuel for years and the containers used for these purposes have been designed and built to specifications that can withstand extreme conditions. These containers have been put through exhaustive testing and have an outstanding record of safety and performance. The National Academy of Sciences recently affirmed that the geologic disposal method is the only scientifically and technically credible solution to the high-level radioactive waste storage issue. The scientific evidence concludes that Yucca Mountain meets or exceeds the criteria for this type of facility.

I fully understand that these are difficult decisions with much public debate. However, the data and facts clearly show that the Yucca Mountain approach is the best answer to this urgent national issue. I am impressed with President Bush's emphasis on a long term energy policy. I urge the your Department to recommend the Yucca Mountain site to the President, and move forward with its implementation in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Robert Whalen
System Engineering Manager
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Morris, IL 60450